



**Figure 3 – Middle Creek**



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**MIDDLE CREEK**

Photo Point MC1 – From SW Looking NW



Photo Point MC2 – From S Looking NNW

**Form 1 – Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings  
from Previous Inventory on Record**

**(1) Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of this area?**

**No** X (Go to Form 2) **Yes** \_\_\_\_\_ (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas):

**Form 2 - Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics**

**Area Unique Identifier:** Middle Creek

**Acreage:** 6,188

**(1) Is the area of sufficient size?** (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below)

**Yes** ☒

**No** ☐

**Description** (describe the boundaries of the area – wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

The Middle Creek inventory unit is located entirely on BLM lands mostly within the Trickle Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), and is located approximately 12 miles west of the Town of Saguache in Saguache County, CO. It is bordered by Colorado Highway 114 on the south, Saguache County Road 38FF on the west, National Forest System lands on the north and northeast, and an un-numbered BLM road (Ford Creek) on the east and southeast. There are 2 active grazing leases and 9 mining claims in the Middle Creek Unit.

**(2) Does the area appear to be natural?**

**Yes** ☒

**No** ☐

**N/A** ☐

**Note:** If "No" is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.

**Description** (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

The Middle Creek inventory area is located entirely on BLM lands and mostly within the Trickle Mountain Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), and is located west of the Town of Saguache on the north side of Colorado Highway 114. Access to the unit is readily available directly from Colorado Highway 114, and subsequent BLM open system roads.

The Middle Creek unit is part of the larger Trickle Mountain landscape and shares the same terrain and vegetative cover types as the Trickle Mountain wilderness characteristics inventory unit. The Middle Creek unit is typified by relatively open, rolling hills that are sparsely forested, primarily on the north side of hill-tops. Lands within the Middle Creek unit are classified

primarily as Inter-Mountain Basins Semi-Desert Grassland, Inter-Mountain Basins Montane Sagebrush Steppe, Southern Rocky Mountain Piñon-Juniper Woodland, and Rocky Mountain Dry-Mesic and Mesic Mixed Conifer Forest and Woodland.

Local area residents and visitors (especially during the fall big game hunting seasons) also utilize the area recreationally for such purposes as; OHV and backcountry driving, hunting and horseback riding.

**(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?**

Yes ☐

No ☒

N/A ☐

**Description** (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

Because of the popularity of the Middle Creek unit for off-highway vehicle recreation (the LWC inventory unit is also designated in the SLVFO Travel Management Plan as the Trickle OHV subunit) during the summer camping months and during the very busy fall big game hunting seasons, and despite the scale of the Trickle landscape (which Middle Creek belongs to), visitors are frequently exposed to the sights and sounds of motorized recreation, firewood collecting, and camping and hunting with mechanized and motorized equipment.

The unit is known for its backcountry experience, however, because of a lack of cover necessary to screen visitors from each other, opportunities for solitude exist within the unit, however, they cannot be considered 'outstanding.'

**(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?**

Yes ☐

No ☒

N/A ☐

**Note:** If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for question 5.

**Description** (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

The primary recreational use in the Middle Creek unit is fall big game hunting. Other activities include driving for pleasure, camping, and firewood collecting. Access to Middle Creek is through a combination of OHV's, foot, and horse, with frequent off-road incursions into the area, primarily from ATV use related to hunting. There are no trails or recreational facilities in the area. All use is self-directed and requires moderate backcountry skills, such as map-reading or GPS familiarity, and basic survival skills. Similar to 'solitude', opportunities exist for primitive and unconfined recreation, however, they cannot be considered 'outstanding.'

**(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value)?**

Yes ☐No ☐N/A ☒**Description:****SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS\*****Area Unique Identifier:** Middle Creek**Results of analysis:**

Of the 6,188 acres analyzed, 0 acres have wilderness characteristics.

The Middle Creek unit is characterized by mostly open, rolling hills and sparsely forested hillsides. Despite its generally natural appearance, the terrain lacks the vegetative diversity and density necessary to screen visitors from each other, and the unit's primary human activities ensure that visitors are essentially never free from the sights, sounds and works of man. Though the area is known for its backcountry experience, primarily related to big game hunting habitat, and the setting offers opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, those experiences cannot be considered 'outstanding.'

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

**Check one:**

☐ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as lands with wilderness characteristics.

☒ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

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 Date: 3 July 2012 Andrew Archuleta

**\*This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.**